

ITEMS FOR MR. CARY FOR THE DCI 9:00 MEETING ON: 22 October 1975

Date

FROM: WPB

Name

## HOUSE PASSES HATCH ACT REVISION

SUBJECT: H.R. 8617, as reported by the full committee, includes the following provisions:

States that Federal employees are encouraged to exercise their right of voluntary political participation.

Prohibits the use of official authority, influence, or coercion with respect to the right to vote, not to vote, or to otherwise engage in political activity.

Prohibits use of funds to influence votes; solicitation of political contributions by superior officials; and making political contributions in Government rooms or buildings.

Prohibits political activity while on duty, in Federal buildings, or in uniform.

Authorizes leave for candidates for elective office.

Establishes an Independent Board on Political Activities of Government Personnel whose function is to hear and adjudicate alleged violations of law.

Authorizes the Civil Service Commission to investigate alleged violations of law and provides for subpoena authority, due process, and judicial review of adverse decisions.

Subjects violators of law to removal, suspension or lesser penalties at the discretion of the Board.

Requires that the Civil Service Commission conduct a program for informing Federal employees of their rights of political participation and report annually to the Congress on its implementation.

As scheduled, H.R. 8617 came up for debate late yesterday afternoon. It was passed by a vote of 288-119. The newspapers report that many floor amendments were rejected during a five-hour debate. There was no report of any amendments being adopted, but we won't know for sure until we get the Record.

The bill and the Committee report circulated among interested Agency offices (OGC, CCS, DDA, OS, and OP). OP objected to the bill on the same grounds that the entire Administration opposed it, i.e. it would endanger the merit system in the Federal service. The only peculiar Agency interest which surfaced was the problem of employees under cover actively participating in campaigns, and the conclusion of the Office of Security and CCS was that this problem could easily be handled by internal regulations.

*There is no sign of any Senate action yet on this issue.*